

Warden Message #2 Hurricane Irene

Monday, August 22, 2011, as of 3:30 p.m. EST

This emergency message is being issued to alert U.S. citizens residing and traveling in The Bahamas that a hurricane **warning** remains in effect for the following islands: ***Turks and Caicos Islands and Southeast Bahamas, which includes the islands of Inagua, Mayaguana, Crooked Islands, Acklins and Ragged Islands***. A warning means that hurricane conditions are possible in the mentioned islands ***within 36 hours***.

A hurricane **watch** is in effect for the Central Bahamas, which includes the islands of ***Cat Island, Great Exuma and its cays, Long Island, Rum Cay and San Salvador***. A hurricane watch means that hurricane conditions are possible in the mentioned islands ***within 48 hours***.

U.S. citizens in The Bahamas and the Turks and Caicos Islands should seriously consider departing while commercial flights are still available. The Airport Authority of the Turks and Caicos Islands has advised the public that they will be suspending all flights within 21 hours, or possibly as early as later today. The Bahamas will soon be deciding if suspension of flight is required. In general, Nassau's international airport is closed if wind speeds reach more than 40 mph. The ability of the U.S. Embassy in Nassau to provide services in the aftermath of a hurricane may be limited.

As of 2:00 a.m. Atlantic Standard Time (AST), Monday, August 22, the center of Hurricane Irene was located near latitude 19.3 degrees north and longitude 68.1 degrees west. Irene is moving west-northwest near 12 mph. Maximum sustained winds remain near 80 miles per hour with higher gusts. Irene is a Category 1 Hurricane (Category 1 means wind speeds are between 74-90 mph). However, strengthening is forecast during the next few days which could turn Irene into a Category 2 or Category 3 cyclone. Irene is predicted to reach near or over the Turks and Caicos Islands and the Southeastern Bahamas on Tuesday and near the Central Bahamas early Wednesday.

Residents in the Central Bahamas should closely monitor the progress of the storm and ensure that all pre-season precautions have been taken and begin final preparations today.

Small craft operators in the Southeast Bahamas should remain in port and small craft operators in the Central Bahamas should not venture far from port.

Residents in the warning area should have already completed any necessary actions to reduce loss of lives and property, and should remain indoors in a secure dwelling or shelter during this hurricane. Small craft operators in the warning area should remain in port. U.S. citizens should stay current with media coverage of local events, weather and marine forecasts, and monitor the [National Hurricane Center](#) and local media to stay aware of any weather developments in their area. For official information from the Bahamian and TCI governments regarding weather conditions, please monitor ZNS or other local media outlets.

Additional information on hurricanes and storm preparedness may be found on our “[Hurricane Season-Know Before You Go](#)” webpage, and on the “[Natural Disasters](#)” page of the [Bureau of Consular Affairs website](#). Updated information on travel in The Bahamas may also be obtained from the Department of State by calling 1-888-407-4747 within the United States and Canada, or from overseas, 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays). Please continue to monitor the Embassy’s [website](#) for updated information.

For any emergencies involving U.S. citizens, please contact the U.S. Citizens Services Unit of the U.S. Embassy’s Consular Section, located 42 Queen Street (across from the British Colonial Hilton Hotel), Nassau; telephone: 242-322-1181; after hours emergency telephone: 242-357-7004; ACS unit fax: 242-356-7174; e-mail: ACSN@state.gov; web page: <http://nassau.usembassy.gov>.

U. S. Embassy
Nassau, Bahamas